



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICE


500 West Temple Street
493 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, CA 90012

JON W. FULLINWIDER
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Telephone: (213) 974-2008
Facsimile: (213) 633-4733

July 15, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Jon W. Fullinwider 
Chief Information Officer

Subject: **COUNTYWIDE E-MAIL RETENTION POLICY INITIATIVE STATUS
REPORT AND PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION**

On February 4, 2004, I informed your Board of my intent to convene a task force to examine issues relating to the County's e-mail usage and, more specifically, to develop a countywide policy that will serve to govern the retention of e-mail by all County departments.

On March 11, 2004, I advised your Board that I had assembled the Countywide E-mail Retention Policy Task Force, and scheduled an initial kick-off meeting on March 17, 2004. The Task Force meeting was held on March 17th, as well as a subsequent meeting on April 13, 2004, to formulate a plan for proceeding with the retention policy development effort. The following County departments participated in these meetings:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessor | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaches & Harbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Relations Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Supervisors – Exec. Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Administrative Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Information Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coroner | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Defender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Counsel | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Social Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children and Family Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community and Senior Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Sheriff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Superior Court |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer/Tax Collector |

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As a result of these meetings, it was determined that the adoption of a formal countywide policy governing e-mail retention would create a significant number of operational problems within the various departments. This is due in large measure to the wide range of business functions supported within the County and the vastly diverse record retention requirements that apply throughout the various County departments. These issues render the concept of a formal policy establishing a standard for retention (and destruction) of e-mail operationally disruptive and unenforceable. In lieu of a formal policy, the Task Force, with County Counsel's participation and input, recommended that countywide guidelines for e-mail retention be drafted and circulated for further review and comment. These guidelines will provide County departments with basic strategies for the efficient and effective management of their e-mail records. The issuance of a guideline should provide sufficient latitude for departments to appropriately deviate to meet their departmental email retention requirements, without violating County policy.

As indicated in my previous status report, a draft document entitled ***Countywide Guidelines for the Retention and Destruction of E-mail*** was developed and is currently under review by County Counsel to ensure that the provisions set forth in these guidelines are not in conflict with existing County policy, state and federal statutes (including HIPAA regulations) or current California or federal case law. Because of the complex issues raised by this proposal, research and review of the document is taking longer than expected.

I will continue to provide your Board with a project status report every 60 days until this effort concludes. I will also submit the final document that emerges from this effort for your review and discussion, if desired.

If you have any questions or require additional information concerning this initiative, please contact me at (213) 974-2008, or in my absence, Jonathan Williams, Chief Deputy, at (213) 974-2080.

JWF:EB:ygd

c: Department Heads
Department I/T Managers/CIOs
Countywide E-mail Retention Policy Task Force Members